November 17th, 1853.

Dr. WALLICH, V.P., in the Chair.

Dr. Booth gave notice that at the next meeting of the Society he would propose the Earl of Harrowby for immediate ballot as a Fellow of the Royal Society, to which as a Peer of the Realm his Lordship is entitled.

The following papers were read:

1. "On the Nerves which supply the Muscular Structure of the Heart." By Robert Lee, M.D., F.R.S. Received Nov. 7.

The author remarks that, in a paper entitled "On the Ganglia and Nerves of the Heart," published in the Philosophical Transactions, Part I. 1839, it is asserted, that "it can be clearly demonstrated that every artery distributed throughout the walls of the uterus and heart, and every muscular fasciculus of these organs, is supplied with nerves upon which ganglia are formed."

He then states that "recent dissections which I have made of the heart of the race-horse, in which both the muscular and nervous structures are largely developed, demonstrate, that from the outer surface to the lining membrane the walls are universally pervaded with nerves, on which ganglia are formed, or enlargements invested with neurilemma, into which nerves enter and from which they issue, as in all the other ganglia of the great sympathetic nerve.

"From these dissections it is seen that the ganglionic nerves which ramify on the surface of the heart, those which have hitherto been delineated in the works of anatomists, are few in number compared to those which are distributed throughout the muscular structure of the organ, many of which are wholly independent of the blood-vessels.

"This anatomical demonstration of the ganglia and nerves of the muscular structure of the heart, completely subverts the opinion still entertained by some physiologists, that the sensitive and contractile powers of the heart are independent of nervous influence. It further indicates the real source of the action of the heart as an entire organ, from the commencement to the termination of life; how the circulation of the blood is carried on when the fœtus has neither brain nor spinal cord, and how the detached parts of the heart continue to contract for a time in some animals after its total separation from the body.

"These dissections are now open to examination by any gentleman who may feel interested in the anatomy and physiology of the heart.

"When Mr. West's drawings of the nerves displayed in these dissections have been completed, they will be presented to the Royal Society, with a description of the appearances delineated."